1/4/70

Paul, Gary, Dick,

This camel feels the fabled straw. Therefore, I write to tell you that if you detect any changes in my attitudes, they are intended and, if out of character, I hope I can maintain them. I've had a bellyfull of too many things, have accepted what I consider to be needless abuse and worst of all, ahev wasted entirely too much time. As I near 58, I ought be out of the diaper business.

I intend no person offense, but I'm not going to try and be diplomatic, for to the degree I'll be able to bring myself to say what I really think and feel, I want to be understood, for whatever good that can mean. If I do it in personal terms, perhaps it may be more comprehensible, but I intend wide application, for I'm concerned about general, not specific things and approaches.

We are our own worst enemies. The greatest obstacles to our success have come from our side. I've found Kleindienst and Rhoads et al more tractible in some cases than Paul, for example. I've gotten more cooperation from the Secret Service than from quite a few of "us". While in many ways we have been able to cooperate well (and we means more than those addressed and me), basically we are at cross-purposes and in the mostbelemental things, there is never any demomstration of even an understanding of what cooperation really means. Superficially, yes. On means, methods and approaches, on the do-how, no. Too many conceive themselves as geniuses and go off half cocked, without thought, without consultation and in too many cases with counterproductive results.

One of The two things that bring this to a head are what I regard as a collossal stupidity by Paul on the newly-released material, for which he and I probably are more responsible than everyone else put together, for no good purpose, and in a way that could not be better calculated to achieve the exact opposite from that for which he so piously hopes. In too many cases, this has happened. Too many things have been used out of context, by the wrong people, who had no idea what they were doing or saying, thus ruining or dominishing the prospects of further advance along those lines, turning off those from whom we might have gotten meaningful help and who had nothing to do with developing the material they misused. I skip the documentation but will offer it on challenge. There are many cases.

The other is relativelt minor. In an effort to forestall some of the potential hazard in what Paul had already done and to make the whole thing easier and faster, I placed a call to Mary last night. Now I use the phone very infrequently. It was a holiday, Sunday night. I placed the call at suppertime. The report then was that Mary would be back at 7. I placed the call three or four times, never found her home from work, waited up until about midnight (having been up since 4 a.m.), didn't leave home this morning until well after what has to be her awakening time, and no return of the call. I do not consider this cooperation, at the very least.

Now there are things we could have done to facilitate the entire matter of getting and distributing whatever is available and at reduced cost. We could have done it cheaper and faster, and could have reduced the possibility of some of it disappearing. My experience, whether or not you believe it, is that this has happened. My belief is that as soon as it is discovered that significant things have been released, they will get lost. This, too, has happened, if not to you, to me, and some of you have the relevant correspondence on it.

To cite a minor example of what could (and should) have happened: When Paul got the first indication of the completion of the declassification, if he felt he could have spent without pain $100 of the cost of getting it, he could have phoned Arch for no more than $1.00, me for the same, and we could have worked something out. Bud is not without means. (I did phone him immediately, and he was much more interested in getting away for a week because <u>he</u> is so tired!). I haven't got the buck, but I did write immediately. I did offer what in my sleep last night I decided I will not do, make a meaningful inventory. If Paul hasn't got the buck to phone me, I sure as hell don't have the money to travel to Washington and pay parking costs. Arch? He is so cooperative he never let me know he had ordered all that was declassified. He is wealthy. He was offered access to everything I have.

His idea of cooperation is to tell me nothing of this. Returning to Paul again, and not to make a bete noir of him, I told him and the rest of you when I learned that the examination was under way, when it was ordered, and the standards to be employed. No one responded, and above all, Paul did not tell me of Arch's plans. I could, with no difficulty, have worked out an arrangement with Bud to share this, to get it all done faster, to have a set or two of duplicates made here, and to have then mailed it to Paul for him to diplicate, as he can, at lower cost. But Jim has found a place where letter-size copies are made for 4¢, which is better than the trouble and cost of mailing. All of this would have permitted an immediate examination of what has been released before there was any prospect of mind-changing, losing or other fancy things-and would have permitted the immediate followup on anything that showed signs of requiring it.

Perhaps, in my acute disappointment, disgust and general feeling of being pissed off I'm not being clear, but what I am trying to say is that this is an A No. 1 example of how not to do things, how to sharpen the blade for your own throat, and of how not to work together, not to cooperate. It is at best immature. We will not succeed with this as an xample of how we function when fine opportunities present themselves.

Especially not when there is litigation, in the courts, under appeal, and about to be filed. There are others of whom you know nothing also planning suits and efforts being made to interest still others.

If I seem to single Paul out, it is because this particular series of what I regard as blunders are his. It is not to say that he hasn't been very helpful and very kind to me, at cost to himself, for he has been, repeatedly. This is not <u>personal</u>. I'm trying to addres how we work together, how we do things, not personalities.

However, there are personal things, and those I label as such. I've got a bellyful of being treated as a mendicant, the unwelcome bastard in the fine home, and of having my wishes with my own materials ignored. I've got more than a bellyfull of all the shit I've had to take, and of the silences of so many who accepted it behind my back and, in fact, were either influenced by it or not made to wonder by it. This is not because it was insulting to me but because it was of no concern (in the many ways it should have been, including as a measure of the responsibility and dependability of the slingers) to those who accepted it and didn't even trouble to tell me.

Nobody owes me anything for the sacrifices I have made. I haven't made them for anyone else. But I have to live with their cost, which is not easy. I could say despite their cost. Look at some of the things I've had to put up with:

When I was affaid to go into debt to buy documents, as Paul observed the time we first met, which was at the Srchives, Sylvia had thousands for Arnoni, with all the measure she needed of him then available (and she wouldn't look at it). She later had funds for Thornley, no less. But never a penny to buy a single page. When Maggie and Bill were sorely troubled by what Liebeler had done and was doing to Lane (which also meant to them and to all of us), they begged me to come out and take Liebeler on. At enormous cost, for I had to abandon my second book on publication to do it, I did, and I shut Liebeler up. Hal's group had promised to pay my expenses. They haven't yet. I am not only in debt for what they didn't pay, I've been paying interest on it, and will, again, in six days. Maggie had much for me, one flaccid ham sandwich, a glass of Scotch and the subsequent claim that all the time I was trying to steal her book, the proof, no doubt, being that when it was under contract to Random House I offered to them to promote it for them and her (as I also did to Bobbs, Merrill for Sylvia's). What the hell was I going to steal from Maggie (and to this day I've never seen her book)? POST MORTEM MX was done before Sylvia's revised and updated book or Tink's were out and I was deep in the N.OL work. On each of the trips I've made to Calif. I was promised at the very least the return of my costs. On no one was there any possibility of personal profit for me. On no one has it happened. Aside from the cost in time, I'm still out more than $1,000 on this alone. Plus what I have to live with, its continuing cost in interest. The LA committee beat me out of the cost of the books I consigned for sale and

had the gall to return what I had given themazz as a contribution to their work for credit! (The Freep doesn't even answer letters when I ask them to pay their bill, and the San Diego committee, all of whom have good incomes, some wealthy, have yet to repay my transportation of even for the books they sold!) On my last trip to California, the LA provisions were such that I had to find Charlie Brown's couch well after dark, a compromising thing for both of us. Of course, during all this time, speeches for big money were being arranged for Mark, so he could further destroy our credibility, and Maggie's luxurious home was open to him, when he could pay for hotels.

Nobody ever helped with a cent when I was trying to prevent the N.O. fiasco. What that cost me none of you (save perhaps Gary) will ever be able to appreciate, including in health. I do not now insist that my judgement was correct in trying to prevent that which I succeeded in preventing, at the end. I think now it was the right t ing to do and then I had no doubt at all. Since it didn't happen, we'll never know. But Moo's appraisal was that I prevented a Supreme Court decision that would have ruined everything and would have gotten Garrison disbarred. Think what you will of the Shaw case, but think also what you can of what this would have done in accrediting the WR. When the trial finally came and I had told everyone what the prospect was, I was there without funds even for food. I had as a pad a bare room-not even a box in it to sit on. I had a cot arranged for, no more. When I phoned Maggie and Vince, the two who could have afforded to help, and told them the real situation and that if I were to stay there I'd have to have help, both later misrepresented this as some kind of blackmail by me. I didn't want to be there! You had to be there to feel why. I didn't even go into the courtroom once while the jury was being impanelled. From the summer of 68 on, when I was in N.O., I ate when I was treated (and Matt was wonderful here), which wasn't very often. Otherwise I breakfasted on a glass of skim milk, my only other meal being a single 19¢ hamburger. Louis Ivon did provide a car nobody else dared use and gas when I was in N.O. But Jaffee, to help ruin us all, got that vacation involving something like $7,000 in Europe. The other such things of which you should know I spare you. To this day my costs have never been repaid. Tell me what selfish purposes I was serving?

When I started to try the court approach, I asked all of you to try and find some kind of help. Dick alone sent me a few bucks, and I know that with his doctoral work and his family needs, he couldn't spare them. Nobdoy else even bothered to reply! NOBODY! Tell me what profit there is or can be for me in this litigation. I have suitsI should have filed to collect money owed me. You see the choice I made.

This is but a bit of the bitterness in my every cup. Each of you knows of more. I ask nothing from you. I am trying xxx to give you and understanding of why my days as foreman are over. I told Gary when Lifton challenged him to confront me with that evil he manufcatured, in toto, and thus learned about it and everyone's silence about it, that I ought become a hermit. Almost everyone in California, save Hal and Paul contributed some falshood, some vilification - all those I'd tried to help (and not one of whom had ever done a single thing to help my work, save to try and steal it, as some did.

How have I wasted my time? To try and Help Nichols, as some of you know, I spent more time that it would have required to write a book. So, he lfits what I showed him in confidence and on hisnpromise, later repeated in glowing writing, not to make any use of it, and actually copyrights some of it in his name. (So you'll not misunderstand, both he and Bud asked this help, Bud with the opinion what Nichols had done was so dangerous it could be legally ruineus to all of us.) Dick and I worked on something together, Dick sent that to John, and John promptly copyrighted that, too.

Paul has his melonty and asks serious comment and criticism. His resonse to mine was approxximately "so there". He has since refused to face serious challenges on it. This is his affair. But it is abusive to ask such effort and then ignore it. All that time I wasted.

Added together, these things took the time it would have required to write three of four books and enough money I had to borrow to publish at least one. I've got to be a zany to continue this way, so I won't. I should have stopped it before this.

The Commission had no monopoly on error and it is said that Christ trusted Judas, to I can easily understand, even outside my own not inconsiderable experience, that perfection is not a state of man. My record when I have seen and predicted error is one I am content to live with, as some of you seem content to ignore. Too many people have taught me that when serious mistakes are made they don't even want to consider it is even possible. Why, then, should I exhaust myself trying? When I find so fine a mind as Paul's rolling the kind of shit it has been with Alvarez and those melons, with all the constructive purposes to which that time and effort could be put, I find myself immersed in futility. With the opinion I have of Paul, his ontellogence and his capability, close to the ultimate futility. Garrison was too much of that for me to undertake another, single one, or to spend a minute on it. I am not opposed to establishing that certain things in the official evidence are valid. Dick knows that he and I went to some trouble to do this, to eliminate one of the perplexing questions. In itself is it not a wrong thing but a right one, for thus can we establish truth. That cannot be said of the melonry, which could be sued for none but hurtful, untruthful purposes. Were it valid it could benothing bett r than another deception. Paul, have you any diea what you have done to the rest of us with this bhsiness and your subsequent attitude? You, with what we all think of you, mixed up in something like this?

But I can't continue this way. I'll still help everybody I can, in every way I can, if I see even the possibility of a constructive purpose. Likewise, I stillwant all the help that can be given me, in whatever form, be it no more than a page I do not have. I have not bee well for more than two years, doctors can't find anything, I'm drained by this enormous concentration noe in its eight year, and I weary and age at an accelerated pace. How much more of it, at aboutn58, I can survive, is becoming daily a question I know I'm closer to having to face. I stillwant to do what I set out to do, and if I keep getting involved in all kinds of shit (again, no offense, only candor, intended), it will be impossible. So, with these recent illustrations of the status of our relations and regard for each other, I have little choice. I me going to have to concentrate on writing and keeping out of what seems not capable of serving constructive purposes. I'll make mistakes, I811 probably not do some things that later I may feel I should have, but the history of the past few years I can not longer ignore. I intend to try not to.

It is bad enough to have to live, needlessly, like some kind of goddmaned beggar without having others rub it in, whether or not they so intend. While living daily with an enormous debt, Donoclean as it is, and wasting time trying to cooperate, to offer knowledge (that too often is given away when I ask that it not be), I've had to lay aside two books that could have made money, which is where I wasx 11/22/63, and in the past year to turn down offers on other subjects from two publishers, a major one in the first case. And, like everyone else, separately I have at least the full sahre of problems of life that, as you get older, you'll learn increase with the years.

I feel all of this and more very deeply, to the point where I ask myself am I being clear, am I saying what I mean, will I be misunderstood. I hope the answers are all yes, but if they are not, I begin what I hope can be a changed way by saying if not, I'm not going to give it another thought. If I am going to succeed in what I set out to do before any of you, under circumstances that face none of you, at costs you will never be able to appreciate, I am, belatedly, going to have to do my own thing my own way. My days of unwelcome effort to prevent the error of others are over. The impossibility of it is impressed upon me. I just can't do it.

If any of you, especially Paul, takes this wrong, I'm sorry. I mean nothing personal. Each of you in many ways has been helpful to me, and I do appreciate it. But if all of you do not rethink our position and yours, mature, break off relations with the irresponsibles and the sick, and wind up with a meaningful kind of active collaboration on many things, including means of work and advance discussion of important decisions, you'll do as well to chop your left hand with your right.

Sincerely,

GS, RB, this is aimed at PH,
but as I said, not in a personal way.
He has just invited disaster, signalled attention to it, all,stupidly.